

September 10, 2003

Dear Commissioners:

I am in favor of *keeping* Element 1 in the rules. I would like to answer the statement of the petitioner that, "The Amateur Service community suffers from the loss to its ranks of a large number of potentially excellent operators who are turned away because of the CW requirement," by this illustration:

"It's what I do," the cabbie said. "You know about The Knowledge?" Lance's cab turned into Park Lane, and Stone's followed.

"What knowledge is that?"

"The Knowledge is what every London cabdriver has to have before he gets a license. You drive all over town on a motorbike for a year or two, taking notes on addresses, public buildings, pubs, theaters and tube stops — whatever you see; you go to classes at night; and finally you take the exam. A question would be, like, 'A passenger wants to go from Hampstead Heath to Wormwood Scrubs Prison. Describe the shortest route, and name every cross street, public building, and tube stop along the way.' Miss one cross street, and you've missed the question. Miss too many questions, and you've failed the exam. Get it right and you have The Knowledge, and you get your license."

Lance's cab drove around Hyde Park Corner, through Belgrave Square, on to Sloane Square, and started down the King's Road. Stone glanced at side streets as they passed and wondered if he could ever memorize them all. "That's pretty impressive," he said.

"I had a mate once, went through all that, passed The Knowledge, got his license, then he went out to celebrate that night, had a lot to drink, and got stopped by the police on the way home and Breathalyzed. Lost his license; he'd taken two and a half years to get it, and he kept it only a few hours."

"Poor fellow," Stone said.<sup>1</sup>

One could really complain here that, "The taxicab service suffered from the loss to its ranks of a potentially excellent operator who was turned away because of the breathalyzer requirement." I mean, why?

The answer is safety. One of the primary bases and purposes of the Amateur Radio Service is to provide emergency communications.

In an emergency the other station may only have CW, or maybe all he can do is turn his transmitter on and off, or maybe that's the only mode that will get through. If Joe Ham doesn't even know the code, it's a bit too late to learn and he might not even be aware an emergency exists. I mean, how would you feel if you or your loved one were in an emergency requiring communication which couldn't get through because the ham on the other end wasn't required to learn the code?

<sup>1</sup>Stuart Woods, The Short Forever (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002) p. 156.

Sincerely,  
Earl S. Gosnell III